

## TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION

Zimbabwe is a unitary republic that recognizes 2 levels of subnational governments in its 2013 Constitution: provinces and local governments, in charge of urban and rural affairs. There are 8 provinces and 2 metropolitan councils at the regional level and 92 local councils at municipal level.<sup>1</sup>



Unless otherwise indicated, all the information in this profile is taken from the previously published Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).<sup>2</sup>

## 1. NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SDG IMPLEMENTATION

Zimbabwe has aligned the SDGs (and the MDGs before) into its development policies and plans: the **Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation 2013-2018 (ZIMASSET)**,<sup>3</sup> the **Transitional Stabilisation Program 2018-2020 (TSP)** and the **National Development Strategy 1 2021-2025 (NDS 1)**.<sup>4</sup> The country's **Vision 2030** has mainstreamed the 2030 Agenda to facilitate joint implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

### 1.1 NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

An inter-ministerial **Steering Committee** chaired by the Chief Secretary to the Office of President and Cabinet provides overall guidance and strategic leadership to SDG implementation. There is also a **Technical Committee**, chaired by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Macroeconomic Planning and Investment Promotion, and represented by SDG focal persons from ministries and representatives from UN agencies, development partners, the private sector, civil society and the Office of the President and Cabinet. It spearheads the coordination, technical processes as well as providing technical back-stopping. In addition, three **thematic clusters** were organized to mainstream and localize the SDGs. Besides Committees of the executive branch, Zimbabwe's legislature also has a **Thematic Committee on SDGs**. The government established a dedicated **SDGs Secretariat** to coordinate SDGs implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

### 1.2 VNR ELABORATION PROCESS

The 2017 VNR process included interviews with key stakeholders representing government, development agencies, private sector, civil society organizations and youth groups. The key messages and the draft report were subjected to review by the SDG technical committee and a broad stakeholder consultation. The 2021 VNR was spearheaded by the **Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare** through the **SDG Secretariat**, and with the assistance from United Nations Zimbabwe (Technical Team). The stakeholders involved included all government ministries departments and agencies SDGs focal persons; stakeholders consulted during 2017 VNR and the 2020 SDGs review; secretariats of umbrella bodies of civil society organizations and business membership organizations (BMOs). While a whole-of-society' approach was employed to engage stakeholders, face-to-face interviews and organizing conferences/workshop/focus group discussions to solicit information from stakeholders were inhibited by COVID-19 restrictions on public gatherings. Within the COVID-19 context, written submission was adopted as the most plausible and viable option to get well considered views from diverse constituencies.

### 1.3 MONITORING

The 2017 VNR mentions a monitoring and evaluation policy including prioritized SDGs targets and indicators. The NDS 1 monitoring and evaluation will be tracked through an e-enabled Whole of Government Performance Management System. The 2021 VNR acknowledges that "disaggregated data on the performance of key SDG indicators remained a challenge. Further,

1. See: [https://www.sng-wofi.org/reports/SNGWOF12019\\_report\\_country\\_profiles\\_DEC2019\\_UPDATES.pdf](https://www.sng-wofi.org/reports/SNGWOF12019_report_country_profiles_DEC2019_UPDATES.pdf)

2. See: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/15866Zimbabwe.pdf> (2017);

[https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/279562021\\_VNR\\_Report\\_Zimbabwe.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/279562021_VNR_Report_Zimbabwe.pdf) (2021)

3. ZIMASSET was adapted in 2015 to mainstream the SDGs.

4. Further improvements on the Institutional architecture include the alignment of NDS1 to SDGs as well as the coordination and information sharing within NDS1 and SDGs implementation Clusters. NDS 1 also integrates the African Union Agenda 2063.

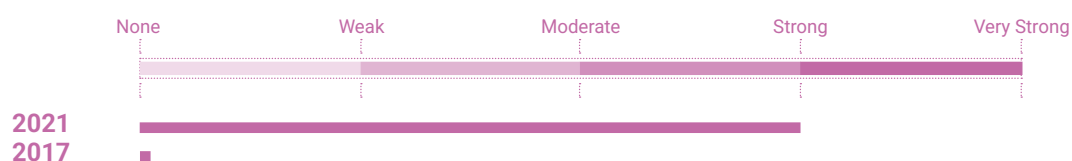
data on the ZIMSTAT SDG portal had gaps and submissions from line Ministries were predominantly narrative and void of key statistics on the status of implementation of SDGs within their jurisdiction”. Zimbabwe has created **focal points appointed by local authorities** to support the work of the national State Statistical Committee.<sup>5</sup> Besides, since 2012 urban local authorities have been gathering data on the state of key services they deliver. They have also been using the data to develop action plans following peer-review processes. This has been done under the Service Level Benchmarking (SLB) initiative supported by the World Bank. But overall, locally-generated or disaggregated data for defining local SDG priorities and to inform local strategies and plans is generally limited.

## 2. LRGs INVOLVEMENT IN SDG LOCALIZATION

In 2017, the VNR claimed that plans were in place to strengthen the capacities of subnational authorities to align strategies and policies at that level to achieve the SDGs. But in 2021, available efforts are still largely at national level. At the local level, the level of SDG awareness, prioritization and implementation remains low. The national coordination mechanisms are neither linked to, nor do they steer, subnational SDG localization. The Ministry responsible for local governments is yet to develop a system to support localization. In addition, important gaps regarding LRGs’ fiscal autonomy, political empowerment, development planning leadership and administrative autonomy constrain their participation in SDG-related functions. Local governments have seized on piecemeal opportunities to learn and adapt localization practices based on external funding or facilitation. This has largely been pilot-like. Based on these initiatives some rural and urban local authorities have adapted their structures assigning SDG-related functions to key departments. A few have gone as far as designing change projects while a much smaller cohort has initiated SDG reporting as is the case with the cities of **Harare** and **Victoria Falls**. The **Association of Local Governments of Zimbabwe (ZILGA)** contributed to the 2021 VNR with its own contribution (but it is not much referred to in the VNR).

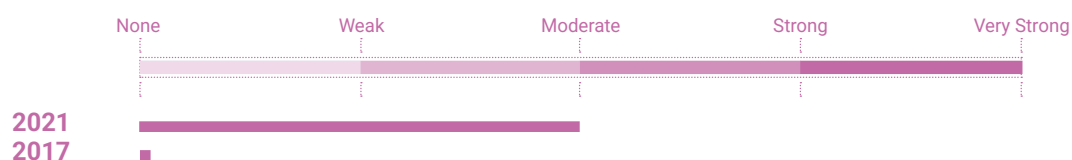
### 2.1 LRGs PARTICIPATION

#### ► In the VNR process



Comments: The Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe presented its own contribution to the 2021 VNR (GTF Survey 2021).

#### ► In national coordination mechanisms for SDG implementation



Comments: Punctual and ad hoc participation of the Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe. Local authorities are now required to report on SDGs (GTF Survey 2021).

This assessment is based on the information collected in the VNRs and in the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments’ annual survey on the localization of the SDGs.

### 2.2 VNR REFERENCES

The 2021 VNR mentions that “**ZILGA** leveraged on an on-going process that was being supported by the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) to produce a subnational voluntary review to coordinate submissions from RDCA and UCA for the VNR”.

### 2.3 SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND CASES

► The town of **Epworth** is an example of participatory approach to slum upgrading. A settlement profile, mapping and enumeration of the informal settlement Magada provided the basis for an upgrading programme as part of an agreement between the residents and their community organizations and local and national government.<sup>6</sup>

► **Harare** developed an informal sector development policy, and vendor markets for informal traders. A Health Strategy for

5. UCLG, 2019, GOLD V Report, <https://www.gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/ENG-GOLD-V-2020.pdf>  
 6. UCLG, 2019, GOLD V Report, <https://www.gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/ENG-GOLD-V-2020.pdf>

2018-2021 was also developed: new health centres were developed and upgraded into 'one-stop-clinics' offering specialist HIV and AIDS, diabetes and tuberculosis services; two of them were upgraded into COVID19 response centres. The city reviewed its gender policy in 2016 to align with SDG targets, and 2016 and 2017 budget allocations for gender related projects were increased. WASH infrastructure projects were also implemented.<sup>7</sup>

► **Victoria Falls** made numerous efforts to guarantee access to efficient, effective, accessible, affordable and sustainable services. This includes: providing safe workplaces for mainly female traders to address poverty, formalizing the informal sector and increasing access to safe drinking water, improving maternal health and HIV and AIDS-focused work, support to youth employment, fighting against gender-based violence. The city has an SDG-aligned Strategic Development Plan.<sup>8</sup>

► The city of **Bulawayo** conducted awareness-raising workshops for municipal staff and CSOs on gender issues. Gender-sensitive development is guided by the city's gender policy. It has a '365 days of activism against Gender Based Violence (GBV)' initiative led by a Gender Desk. The municipality of **Beitbridge** also has a gender policy and a sexual harassment policy, and a dedicated staff (a gender focal person and gender champion).<sup>9</sup>

► The government launched the Local Authorities Digital System (LADS), expected to be used in 92 local authorities to improve government internal operation and administration.<sup>10</sup>

► The government has also embarked on the regulation of informal settlements programmes (currently being implemented in 4 settlements) and an urban renewal programme in **Mutare, Bulawayo** and **Harare**.<sup>11</sup>

## 2.4 VOLUNTARY SUBNATIONAL AND/OR LOCAL REVIEWS (VSRs / VLRs)

The cities of **Harare** and **Victoria Falls** published a VLR in 2020.<sup>12</sup> The **Association of Local Governments of Zimbabwe (ZILGA)** has prepared a VSR in 2021.<sup>13</sup> The analysis shows three gaps slowing SDG implementation at the local level. These are about i) data and institutional fragmentation, ii) resource limitations (conclusion of an analysis of national budget allocations to LRGs), and iii) absence of SDG institutionalization.

## 2.5 MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The key instruments being used to strengthen localization include national program-based budgeting and intergovernmental fiscal transfers. The leadership of the Ministry responsible for local government (in close liaison with the national lead Ministry on SDGs as well as the Ministry responsible for treasury) is critical (yet insufficient) for tracking financing of SDG's and actual local delivery. On the side of LRGs, local fiscal gaps are due to a combination of underperforming local economies due to rising poverty and macro-economic shrinkage in a context lacking access to affordable development or long-term finance.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, resource flows for SDG implementation are weak.<sup>15</sup>

# 3. RELEVANT INFORMATION

## 3.1 WOMEN PARTICIPATION

As specified by the 2021 VNR, women represent 13.3% of local government councillors (190 women and 1169 men).

## 3.2 COVID 19

Institutional arrangements for SDG implementation and monitoring have faced challenges emanating from COVID19. Inadequate infrastructure resulted in the reduction of SDG cluster meetings for coordination purposes. At the local level, information and communication innovations were undertaken by all local authorities followed by securing access to basic services generally and health systems particularly. Local economic development support was also reported by many local authorities.

7. See: [https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/zimbabwe\\_2021.pdf](https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/zimbabwe_2021.pdf)

8. See: [https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/zimbabwe\\_2021.pdf](https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/zimbabwe_2021.pdf)

9. See: [https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/zimbabwe\\_2021.pdf](https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/zimbabwe_2021.pdf)

10. See: [https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/zimbabwe\\_2021.pdf](https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/zimbabwe_2021.pdf)

11. See: [https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/zimbabwe\\_2021.pdf](https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/zimbabwe_2021.pdf)

12. See: [https://www.gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/harare\\_2020.pdf](https://www.gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/harare_2020.pdf) and [https://www.gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/victoria\\_falls\\_2020.pdf](https://www.gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/victoria_falls_2020.pdf)

13. See: [https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/zimbabwe\\_2021.pdf](https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/zimbabwe_2021.pdf)

14. Fiscal decentralisation has been constrained in Zimbabwe mostly by the prevailing political, legal, and economic environment. This has limited the taxing and expenditure powers. Revenue sources for local governments (property taxes, development levies, user charges, license fees and income generating projects) have not been performing well.

15. See: [https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/zimbabwe\\_2021.pdf](https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/zimbabwe_2021.pdf)

## 4. SDG INDICATORS<sup>16</sup>

5.5.1. (b) Proportion of seats held by women (%) in local governments		12 (2018)
6.1.1. Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services (%)	Urban	65 (2020)
	Rural	13 (2020)
6.2.1. (a) Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services (%)	Urban	16 (2020)
	Rural	30 (2020)
11.1.1. Proportion of population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing (%)		33.5 (2018)
11.6.1. Proportion of municipal solid waste collected and managed (%)		22.6 (2015, Harare)
11.6.2. Air pollution – annual means of particulate matter in cities (population weighted)		25.2 (2016)
11.b.2. Proportion of local governments that have adopted local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national strategies (%)		90.28 (2019)

<sup>16</sup> The data used for this table come from the UN SDG Indicators Database. See: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/UNSDG/IndDatabasePage>. More information on the country's progress towards the SDGs here: <https://country-profiles.unstatshub.org/zwe>